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COMMAND LEADERSHIP AFLOAT
THROUGH COMMAND MANAGEMENT

LEO P. BAUERLEIN

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COMMAND LEADERSHIP AFLOAT
THROUGH
COMMAND MANAGEMENT

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An Abstract
Presented to
Professor Paul Ecker
Faculty of the Postgraduate School
United States Navy
Monterey, California

* * * * *

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
(Management)

* * * * *

by
Leo P. Bauerlein, LCDR, USN
June 1961

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this project is to present criteria concerning the concept which states that "leadership to enlisted men is management to officers."

Emphasis is placed on command management, with attention especially directed to the management principles and processes which are related to and applicable to most afloat commands. The paper is written with the firm conviction that there is no one formula that will answer all shipboard management problems. Each commanding officer must equip himself with the essential knowledge and understanding of the considered basic principles, in conjunction with any others he deems appropriate for his particular situation.

The effective and efficient utilization of manpower, money, and material by afloat commanding officers is no longer only desirable, but due to the present-day complex, million-dollar ships, it has become a necessity. The attainment of these objectives can be most readily achieved through the proper appreciation and application of sound and proved management practices and effective leadership.

The motivating influence in the presentation of this material has been the belief of the author that in an afloat command situation, the commanding officer can establish and maintain the desired effective leadership



by utilizing the recognized management techniques and principles. By so doing, he will be regarded as a good leader by his subordinates and a practitioner of good management by his superiors.



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INTRODUCTION

The idea for this project was conceived during a conversation with two U.S.N. Chief Petty Officers who were instructors assigned to the Naval Leadership School in San Diego, California. While discussing the fact that the Leadership School uses several of the same textbooks used at the Management School, one Chief happened to remark, "actually, leadership to us (enlisted men) is management to you (officers)," and so the idea was born.

This concept remained on my mind, and the more I read and studied about management functions and practices, the more I began to think that perhaps there is more fact in this statement than the Chief realized. In some respects the operational functions of leadership and management are synonomous, but the labels attached to them differ according to the relative position we occupy within an organization.

This paper, then, is an attempt to show that the commanding officer of an afloat unit need not be a dynamic leader personally in order to establish and maintain an effective and responsive command, but that he can create a more effective command if he would apprise himself of the present-day philosophy of management and apply management methods to achieving the purposes of his organization. ✓

An effort was made to extract from the various



principles of management those sufficiently related and applicable to most commands in order to best delineate the previous-stated premise. Management problems are not necessarily identical in any two commands; however, some of the basic principles are universal in application.

It is intended, therefore, that this paper show that by a proper knowledge, understanding, and application of these basic management principles, along with any others he deems applicable to his problems, a commanding officer is better able to maintain an effective and responsive unit. By so doing, he will be regarded as a good leader by his subordinates and a practitioner of good management by his superiors.

CHAPTER I

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT PARALLELS AND DIFFERENCES

The Navy Line Officer for decades has prided himself on the premise that an officer can adapt himself readily to any situation that might exist and come within his jurisdiction within the Navy. We can agree, I am sure, that this theory has been generally accepted, especially among the junior officers. All junior officers at some time have received orders to a certain ship with a specific assignment, such as assistant engineer. After reporting aboard, the first three months or so are utilized reading every publication available concerning the plant and related duties. Then, when the officer has gained confidence and is able to relax, thinking: "Well, I've got it made," he receives orders to a new assignment. He starts all over again and inevitably succeeds. The Navy has, in essence, succeeded and prospered on this theory that an officer can and will adapt himself to all situations. However, will this system be successful in the future day Navy with its ever advancing technology and its more intricate and complex assignments? This concern is especially applicable to the assignment of afloat commanding officers and even more so when assigning junior officers, LTJG's and LT's, with limited background to command billets.

The ultimate aspiration of every line officer is to

command a ship. When that day becomes a reality and the words, "I relieve you, sir" becomes a memory, will the officer concerned realize and appreciate the tasks and responsibilities he has undertaken. These tasks and responsibilities are unequivocally his and cannot be assumed casually. "The responsibility of the commanding officer for his command is absolute. . . . The authority of the commanding officer is commensurate with his responsibility, subject to the limitations prescribed by law and these regulations. While he may, at his discretion, and when not contrary to law or regulations, delegate authority to his subordinates for the execution of details, such delegation of authority shall in no way relieve the commanding officer of his continued responsibility for the safety, well-being, and efficiency of his entire command."¹ In the ultimate analysis, how well the commanding officer fulfills his tasks and responsibilities will be determined by the manner in which he maintains his command in a state of maximum effectiveness for war service; and when considering other than actual combat leadership, how well he performs is greatly determined by how well he manages.

The acceptance of afloat command status in the Navy is in many aspects analogous to promotion to a top

¹United States Navy Regulations, art. 0701, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1948, p. 81.

management position in the civilian business world. Similarly, industrial and military organizations have outgrown the chrismatic command concept. No longer do we require a Ford, Rockefeller, Nelson, or a John Paul Jones to lead. The present day afloat organizations have become so complex that the emphasis has shifted to a system of management designed to solve problems which have become more varied and intricate than those of preceding generations. The eventual success of a modern business or military organization does not depend on the qualities of one man, but rather ever more upon the multiplicity of people who, whether they be vice presidents, commanding officers, foremen, or divisional petty officers, are all managers. The time has passed when a man can just assume command and expect the organization to follow the course to the objectives he sets without first establishing himself as a member of the collective organization. A person who utilizes his position as a means to achieve the goals of all members of the organization rather than his own personal gratification is the person who commands effectively. Appointing a man as head of an activity does not make him a commanding officer; this distinction must be earned.

The end product for the business organization to promote sales for monetary profit and for the military organization to maintain American military stature for

the profit of individual freedom, although quite different in nature, nevertheless require the same methods of achievement.

There are some who maintain that the commanding officer must possess good leadership qualities and others who feel that his primary attribute should be the ability to exercise effective management skill. In this regard I feel that management--broader in scope and encompassing that which is considered leadership--when applied to shipboard command, is leadership.

Leadership and management have been defined in numerous ways and upon close study, they have some basic similarities; for instance, leadership is defined as, "the process by which an executive directs, guides, or influences the works of others in choosing and attaining particular ends."² Management is defined as, "the accomplishing of a predetermined objective through the efforts of other people."³ Naval Leadership is "the art of accomplishing the Navy's mission through people."⁴

Not only by definition are leadership and management similar, but also by personal characteristics. Let us

²Dalton E. McFarland, Management Principles and Practices, New York, The MacMillan Co., Inc., 1958, p. 253.

³George R. Terry, Principles of Management, Illinois, Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1956, p. 19.

⁴General Order 21.

consider some of the characteristics which studies attest have contributed most to success in the leadership-management role. The most prevalent among the characteristics is the desire for achievement. "Most executives have internally built feelings that they must accomplish something, they must do something."⁵ "Leaders are possessed, too, by a powerful inner drive. They feel, or at least act as though they feel, an extreme urgency to satisfy their personal desires."⁶ Several other qualities normally associated with high-caliber performance are: intelligence, honesty, organizing skill, self-confidence, and decisiveness. The extra power that has spurred some on to greater heights is the "art" of handling people. The best type of manager or leader is the man who has trained himself so well in this skill that it has become instinctive. Thus we can conclude that good leadership and effective management indicate to a degree certain personality requirements; however, the traits vary with the operating situation.

The value of a well-integrated, smoothly operating organization is recognized by industrial and naval personnel alike. This appreciation rises from the complex

⁵William E. Henry, "What Makes A Successful Executive?," The Supervisor's Management Guide, New York, American Management Association, 1953, p. 58.

⁶Koontz and O'Donnell, Principles of Management, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1959, p. 440.

problems which must be solved in order to improve existing organizations under continually changing conditions. The key to maintaining such an organization is effective decision making when selecting the proper course to achieve the collective objectives. "Decision making ability ranks high among the basic traits of successful managers. The determination of the work to be done, the resolution of conflicts, and the selecting of one course from several alternatives is a part of the manager's every day activity,"⁷ and who can deny the need for consistent ability of this nature on the part of the commanding officer afloat?

The commanding officer through the line organizes the work, supervises it, and, in effect, delivers the finished goods. In the process of organizing his work he must, by effective decision making, conserve resources, human and material, in order to produce a maximum volume of end results without waste of resources and time. The effectiveness of his decisions may be evaluated in terms of their correlation with the requirements as set forth in the ships assigned mission. This evaluation is the basis for judgment as to whether or not the commanding officer, as a manager, operated as had been anticipated.

Commanding officers, "as managers, are all engaged

⁷Terry, op. cit., p. 14.

in the tasks of getting things done through people."⁸
It is their responsibility to ensure that the expected results are achieved through the efforts of their subordinates.

The motorist drives; the poet writes; the dentist extracts teeth; each of them then performs a series of actions, or "functions," which are peculiar to his type of work. This is also true of the commanding officer afloat. He performs functions which are characteristic of management. These managerial activities are grouped "around the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling."⁹ These are the five "functions" of management that should be performed by every commanding officer, by delegation, down through his organizational structure. To be successful in this respect, he must know not only how to delegate, but how to keep his hands off after he has delegated.

It is not sufficient that the commanding officer display professional competence in managing only the technical and military aspects. He must simultaneously possess and exercise other skills relating both to the personnel through whom operations are effected and to the external influences upon the organization. "Attainment of

⁸Koontz and O'Donnell, op. cit., p. 42.

⁹Ibid., p. 35.

teamwork, development of morale, counseling of subordinates, maintenance of discipline, improvement of community relationships, and a host of other actions and requirements involving human relations, both individual and group,"¹⁰ are inherent in the commanding officer's responsibilities.

McSweeney asks the question, "What is good business management?" and replies, "Stripped down to its essentials, it is leadership."¹¹ In an afloat command situation I consider the converse to be the case--"good leadership is good management." "Whether we call this ability, leadership, or management, it is one of our country's scarcest commodities and, at the same time, a commodity that will be needed in increasingly greater amounts to meet the demands"¹² of advancing technology and our continually growing complexity of naval ships.

How, then, does an officer command once he attains this ultimate honor the Navy can bestow? This is a difficult question to answer, for each officer must command in accordance with his own beliefs, capability,

¹⁰Department of the Air Force, The Management Process, AFM 25-1, 1954, p. 5.

¹¹Edward McSweeney, "How Do You Score on Leadership?," Advanced Management, Vol. 24, No. 9, September, 1959, p. 21.

¹²Staff of Supervisory Management, Leadership on the Job, New York, American Management Association, 1957, p. 45.

and training. He must become thoroughly familiar with his ship, its mission, organization, pending operations, maneuvering characteristics, and above all he should make every effort to get to know his crew, the people through whom he will have to get things done. Having become familiar with his ship, his next vital step, just as in business management, is to define objectives and set standards to ensure that they are met and maintained. He must organize his command so that personnel and material are utilized most effectively. An effective commanding officer will delegate as much authority as possible to subordinates. He will be fair and consistent in meting out discipline. He will develop pride within his crew--pride in themselves as individuals, as well as in the ship--to achieve a high feeling of respect for themselves as well as their shipmates. Thus, it seems that the facets of command are almost endless, for those listed are not the complete list by any measure.

When you assume command, you must command. Your primary duty is to give your crew and ship purpose and direction, providing them with the most economical, efficient, and effective means to attain predetermined objectives. The best way to coordinate this effort is through effective utilization of the management process.

There probably is no shortage of candidates for command billets, but there assuredly is a limited number

who realize and appreciate the effectiveness of command management as needed in today's fleet. I say "needed today" because the task of the present-day commanding officer is quite different in many respects from that of his predecessors. "It is no longer enough that he be highly skilled in his own particular specialty. He must have a broad knowledge and understanding of the social and economic forces that daily shape the world about him; he must have a basic philosophy that is sound and workable, know what the skills and tools of management are and how to use them; he must be able to motivate people with the will to work, to improve their knowledge and skills, get them to produce to their highest capabilities and thus attain a sense of personal satisfaction; he must look for and be willing to accept great responsibility and the obligation it entails; he must be one who can be relied upon to put some 'plus' into his efforts."¹³

To work for a commanding officer who puts this "plus" into his efforts is always a pleasure. By his example, and through the inception of management education and development within the Navy, the number of this type of commanding officer is increasing much to the benefit of the Navy.

¹³Lawrence A. Appley, Management in Action, New York, American Management Association, 1957, p. 72.



As combatant vessels grow in size, complexity, and responsibility beyond the fondest dreams of the Naval leaders of a few decades ago, it may well be that some of our well-established traditions and concepts of Naval organization structure and procedure are no longer effective nor adequate. We must preserve what was good out of past practices, while also continuously searching for new means and devices to operate more effectively the current and future afloat organizations. One of these means, I feel, is more extensive use of the industrial concepts of management by individual commanding officers.

The modern naval ship has become so complex, involves so many people, that it is physically impossible for the commanding officer to keep in touch with all the details. Further, he could not possibly be an expert in all the specialties which have grown up, each with techniques that require long training.

The modern commanding officer, therefore, need not be a leader in the sense that John Paul Jones, James Lawrence, and Oliver Perry were, but rather his aim should be to perfect the functions of management during periods of calm in an effort to prevent crisis from arising during emergencies.

"The essence of any military organization is its structure of authority, the ultimate source of which is the enormous file of written regulations. Military groups carry the normal bureaucratic stress on authority to its extreme development."¹ The degree to which this vested authority is accepted by subordinates determines the reliability of response as well as the operational effectiveness of the organizational unit.

The need for officer rotation and periodic changes of command results in the almost continuous problem of "acceptance" within Naval units. The extent to which an individual realizes he is confronted with this problem will determine how readily his authority will be accepted. There are some individuals "who believe that if authority is delegated to them, they are automatically equipped to fulfill their responsibilities. They are under the mistaken impression that the wreath of authority resting on one's brow immediately produces in others the correct response to such authority."² In a dictatorial society perhaps this is true, but in the American society the "acceptability of a person will depend first, upon the

¹Arthur K. Davis, "Bureaucracy in the Navy," in Human Relations in Administration, R. Dubin, Tokyo, Japan, Prentice-Hall (Asian Edition), 1951, p. 350.

²Lawrence A. Appley, Management in Action, New York, American Management Association, 1957, p. 74.

recognition in him by his (subordinates) of qualities of excellence, qualities that give them confidence in him and make them willing to accept his (authority)."³ Such acceptance of authority by subordinates indicates to the commanding officer that they will thereby contribute to the attainment of the unit's mission which they recognize as being good. In the final analysis, what counts is not what subordinates are told but what they accept.

"It is widely considered that there are two most general concepts of authority: functional and ultimate authority."⁴

Functional authority exists when a commanding officer is obeyed because he can show convincingly that he has made the correct decision. In this instance the commanding officer is accepted in his position of authority primarily because of his knowledge and, perhaps, shiphandling ability. Each succeeding problem is another challenge to his authority, and in each case it is necessary for him to demonstrate again the qualifications for his command status. "Functional authority seems to be distinguished by a peculiar form of relativity; it is dependent on the actual quality of performance,"⁵ and is

³Mooney and Reiley, The Principles of Organization, New York, Harper Brothers, 1939, p. 177.

⁴Heinz Hartman, Authority and Organization in German Management, Princeton University Press, 1959, p. 7.

⁵Ibid., p. 6.

founded upon respect. This type authority is easily established and just as easily destroyed. The emphasis is placed on competence and performance which can be nurtured by a system of training. This then indicates sound reasoning for the officer fitness report system--a system established, in part, to maintain a continuous evaluation of potential command performance. Functional authority, even though seemingly well-established, can be readily destroyed by a series of ineffective decisions or perhaps poor ship-handling maneuvers which lessen the respect which subordinates previously maintained. To offset such a destruction the commanding officer should require department head or wider participation in his everyday decisions. They can offer him a great deal more than mere facts. He receives interpretations of facts, conclusions, judgments, and ideas so that, in effect, subordinates can be associated with his final determinations. Therefore, while the commanding officer may be the superior authority in the afloat organization, before his decisions are made, there has previously taken place much of the decision process by his subordinates. Instead, then, of a single functional authority, we might think of this as cumulative authority--a type of authority which, in effect, could emanate from within the organizational hierarchy relative to a given situation or problem.

Ultimate authority, the second concept, results when

authority is considered self-evident, and there is no need for the commanding officer to prove his claims. In this instance, he may demand the obedience of his subordinates because all parties take this for granted, laying their claim to an authority derived from United States Navy Regulations which state in part, "the authority of the commanding officer is commensurate with his responsibility."⁶ Ultimate authority, then, is independent of technical knowledge or any efficiency in decision making, and once an officer assumes command, it is difficult to show that he has violated his ultimate authority. In the present-day Navy, however, so much goes to contribute to command decisions before the part which the commanding officer takes in them, which is often merely the official promulgation of a decision, that the conception of final authority is losing its force in the afloat organizational unit. All too often it is the Division, Squadron, or Type Commander who makes the decision which must be promulgated in the name of the commanding officer; and many times such decisions tend to encroach upon the commanding officer's authority and thereby limit his "zone of acceptance" by subordinates.

Authority, then, may be derived from the power inherent in the position assigned; however, it means

⁶United States Navy Regulations, 1948, para. 0701, p. 81.

nothing unless it is recognized and accepted by subordinates.

Not infrequently upon assuming command, an officer at first experiences coolness on the part of his subordinates. This is, to a degree, to be expected. Aloofness is common among strangers and, initially, the new commanding officer is just a stranger to his crew. In some instances this aloofness may be sharpened by the fact that the crew, via the grapevine, has received prior unfavorable information concerning the manner in which the new commanding officer exerted his authority in previous commands. Also, perhaps the departing commanding officer had been respected to such a degree by the crew that they feel him irreplaceable. Such initial handicaps may be easily surmounted by the new-comer with the demonstration of his command ability employing the management process. In approaching his problem he must keep constantly in mind the fact that he is dealing with individuals whose actions may be influenced greatly by their feelings. He must develop an acceptive and positive mood in the crew.

Each commanding officer, in his efforts to maintain an effective organization, obtains his results in either a democratic or autocratic manner.

The democratic commanding officer is one who retains his position of preeminence in the organization through

his personal abilities and capabilities. Further, he is the commanding officer who judges his subordinates by a multiple scale of values and considers the values of others as being as important as his own. He is also the one who controls through morale and directs the voluntary activities and enthusiasm of the crew toward specific goals which they find worthwhile and satisfactory. Since the advent of General Order 21, there has been a definite effort on the part of the Chief of Naval Personnel to "differentiate between officers who obtain results in a positive, humane, considerate, and morally responsible (democratic) manner from those who achieve the same results in an autocratic fashion."⁷ Presently, some commanding officers believe the democratic concept is the latest in what is needed for an effective organization, while others cast aspersions upon it as a threat to their authority.

The autocratic commanding officer is one who retains his hold over the crew through domination and the power of his position in the organization, the type who leads through only one scale of values--that of domination. "His accommodation to life flows from his characteristic relationship to authority, which he has encountered as authoritarian power. From it he has learned to see human

⁷BuPers Instruction 1611.11, dated 14 December 1959.

relations in terms of dominance and submission, the hierarchy of command and obedience."⁸ When considering the current emphasis of the American Ideology and its stress on human dignity and individual freedom, it is difficult to believe that any commanding officer with a dogmatic personality would be able to maintain an effective and highly responsive unit; his approach would be totally inadequate.

In the organic system of relationships that constitute the present-day afloat Naval unit, "authority does not reside in the superior individual; it resides in the kind of relationship existing between superior and subordinate. Without the cooperative attitudes of subordinates the voice of authority can speak, but the big booming noises it makes do not register upon (a crew) which refuses to accept it as authoritative."⁹ "

Without the acceptive attitude of subordinates, which can be established and maintained most effectively by the management process, the commanding officer's voice of authority cannot speak effectively if at all.

Success in gaining acceptance by subordinates is heavily dependent on the commanding officer's ability to communicate. This problem will be investigated in the next chapter.

⁸Samuel Jacobs, The Authoritarian Personality, Mimeographed Pamphlet.

⁹F. J. Roethlisberger, "A New Look for Management," in Selected Readings in Management, F. A. Shull, Jr., Illinois, Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1958, p. 85.

The knowledge and ability of a commanding officer is of little use to himself or to his crew if he is unable to communicate effectively. Likewise, his policies and objectives mean nothing if they cannot be communicated to his subordinates in such a fashion as to give them a clear understanding of his intents and desires. What intensifies this communication problem is the fact that relationships among the crew members are in a continual state of flux. Personnel losses, transfers, promotions, and replacements are continuously occurring. Decisions about new policies and procedures are constantly forthcoming, especially immediately after a command change. Such decisions often modify division and department relationships. Quite often some crew members may be informed about changed relationships before others; some, perhaps, are not informed at all. Such a condition would surely disrupt command morale and efficiency.

To the commanding officer an effective communication system is a necessary management tool needed to ensure a smooth-running, effective, responsive, and happier organization. Looking at his day-to-day policies and his day-to-day practices, does he get across to the crew the things about the ship, the Navy Department, and the Department of Defense which he feels the individuals ought to know? If not, then his communications system is inadequate

and his unit is not in a peak readiness condition.

Straight-thinking is imperative prior to any communication. In a command situation, especially, it is not sufficient to take a quick look at something and formulate a hasty conclusion. Commanding officers are striving to get things done through people, and such a decision making process can play havoc with organization effectiveness and morale. "The foundation for good (command) management, it has often been said, is good communication. But straight-thinking comes first."¹

The purpose of communication is to transfer from the mind of one person to the mind of another the mental images needed to convey ideas, policies, objectives, etc. Perfect communication is achieved when the receiver sees exactly the same image as the sender. "Few people stop to realize that the words and phrases a man uses and hears have, to him, only the meanings he attaches to them. The meanings with which he grew up, the meanings used by the social group in which he spent his formative years, are the ones that automatically come to his mind when he hears the words. When the speaker and the hearer each assume that the other man is using his personal definition--when they use terms that mean one thing to the speaker and a quite different thing to the hearer--misunderstandings are inevitable. In many cases, these are never discovered;

¹Supervisory Management Staff, Leadership on the Job, New York, American Management Association, 1957, p. 49.

neither the speaker nor the hearer is aware of what has happened."² Of the many barriers to communication, the failure to state things clearly is undoubtedly encountered most often.

In order to have his ideas understood correctly, a commanding officer would do well to abide by the four principles for getting ideas across most effectively as advocated by Secord.³ These four principles are:

1. Speak the other fellow's language--simply. This takes a good vocabulary. The proof of a good vocabulary is the ability to say everything you wish to say in words that are easy for the individuals with whom you are communicating to understand.

2. Make one point at a time. In getting an idea across to another person (or a group), there is seldom room for more than one point at a time. There is room for only one major emphasis in any situation where one person is trying to tell something to one or more people.

3. Dramatize by an example. After making a point, dramatize it by an example. The use of examples puts your idea across with greater impact and clarity, and consequently makes the directive seem reasonable, and it gives the person a device for remembering it.

²Manley Howe Jones, Executive Decision Making, Illinois, Richard D. Irwin, 1957, pp. 183-184.

³"How to Get Your Ideas Across," in Leadership on the Job, New York, American Management Association, 1957, p. 58.

4. Never use criticism alone. If the commanding officer has to deal with a person critically he should never use criticism alone. All a commanding officer has to do to kill morale in his organization is to cut off all praise. In dealing with his crew members critically he should never use criticism alone, but season it with some praise.

"A communication that cannot be understood can have no authority. An order issued, for example, in a language not intelligible to the recipient is no order at all--no one would so regard it. The recipient must disregard them or merely do anything in the hope that it is compliance."⁴

How the commanding officer gives his orders will always be important, because the promulgation of the orders is what sets his subordinates in motion towards the organization objectives. Obviously, there can be no one best way to give orders because the method varies considerably with the people concerned and the particular situation at hand. However, in all instances, it is desired that the subordinates perform some action upon receipt of orders; therefore, it is essential that they have a clear understanding of what is required and expected. In all situations, then, to secure the desired response

⁴Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1958, p. 165.

we may conclude that the basic technique of giving orders should require that "an order should be intelligible, in accord with the organizational objectives, and capable of accomplishment."⁵

If an order is unintelligible to subordinates, they cannot possibly respond in the manner expected. The commanding officer has a perfect conception in his own mind of what he desires. His task, then, is to convey that same conception to the minds of his crew members in an unaltered form. He always thinks he has accomplished this. However, many times there is a great difference between what he thinks he has conveyed and what the crew actually receives. In a naval unit this difference can sometimes result in the damage to a naval ship or even the loss of human lives.

One of the major results to emerge from a commanding officer's utilization of the management process is the coordination of the efforts of the various organizational departments and divisions in the most effective manner to attain the objectives. This coordination requires the whole-hearted cooperation of each and every member of the organization. Such cooperation will result if each crew member is made to understand the part his action plays in the achievement of the over-all objective of the organization.

✓ Tell why

⁵John Robert Beishline, Military Management for National Defense, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1957, p. 200.

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Realizing and appreciating these objectives, his acceptance of orders is all the more enthusiastic when he knows the part he plays in their accomplishment. Should an order not be in consonance with the objectives, the response will be something less than that expected.

No good commanding officer ought to issue orders unless he feels they can actually be carried out. Should he issue orders which cannot be accomplished, such orders would result in excessive loss of time and material, poor morale, and a decline in discipline. Consequently, a condition of ineffectiveness would prevail. Some commanding officers feel that by their orders alone they are able to squeeze out a bit more from each individual and piece of equipment. This reasoning, of course, is fallacious because when individuals and equipment are ordered to produce beyond their capacity, they very often fail.

"The wise (commanding officer) will carefully weigh the capabilities, capacities, (and attitudes) of his subordinates and endeavor to issue no orders that require them to perform beyond their capacities. Under such circumstances the recipients of an order can have no alternative but to obey to the best of their capabilities."⁶

The current patterns of communication are classified according to the information flow, as "down, up, and

⁶Ibid., p. 202.

across." There are aspects in the flow of communication from commanding officer to subordinates which are distinct from those in the flow of communications from the subordinate levels to top command. The flow of communication on the same level further differs from the other two patterns.

Accepted authority is the backbone of communication "down." It is exemplified in giving orders with full expectation that these orders will be carried out "verbatim," that is, generating action exactly as the commanding officer expected. An order is an effective means of communication and in naval units, it usually serves the purpose adequately; however, with the growth in size of naval ships and the diversification of duties, the bare issuance of orders leads on occasion to unanticipated results, as has been previously mentioned.

The pattern of communication from the subordinate level to the top is a relatively new aspect in command philosophy. Non-recognition of the need for communication "up" was due partly because of the previously prevalent, autocratic-type commanding officers who harbored a distorted interpretation of military discipline which abhors any semblance of talking back. Present-day, management-minded commanding officers have come to acknowledge the "feedback" communication as one means of determining how effective they are at giving orders.

Communication "across" refers to the inter-department or inter-division communication within a naval unit. Communication of this type is the backbone of successful cooperation. It is the basic tool in securing coordination among the divisions and departments of the organization.

Orders and instructions are the management media which bring to bear the force of the organizational elements on the accomplishment of the objectives or mission. "If correct orders are not issued to direct the organizational action, failure can result even though the functions of planning and organizing were performed in an exemplary manner. Because the commanding function deals with people to a large degree, effective coordination of effort is necessary so that unity of effort may be directed toward accomplishment of the common purpose."⁷

Commanding officers who, by means of an effective communication system, issue correct orders and thereby secure effective coordination will achieve that unity of purpose and harmony of action which results in an efficient accomplishment of objectives and assigned missions.

⁷Ibid., p. 211.

"Personnel is one of the most important factors in performing the function of commanding. A proper performance of the function, therefore, requires a knowledge and deep appreciation of human relationships. No good commanding officer can lack these attributes to any pronounced degree. The commander must engender an enthusiastic desire on the part of the individual members of the organization to give the highest cooperation in order to accomplish the objectives (and assigned missions) effectively."¹

An afloat organization which possesses a confident, aggressive, resolute spirit of whole-hearted cooperation in a common effort, particularly when this cooperation is marked by zeal, self-sacrifice, or an unconquerable spirit, can also be considered to possess that intangible something which we call good morale. The men serving in such an organization are deeply attached to their ship and strive to see it excel in everything, whether it be competitive exercises for score, inspections, or even outward appearance. They have confidence in their commanding officer as well as confidence in their ability as a team. This condition, commonly referred to as morale, is one of the most important factors in command management.

¹Beishline, op. cit., p. 204.

The ultimate success of an organization, military or industrial, depends a great deal on the enthusiasm and responsiveness of the personnel assigned. The degree to which these members respond determines, in effect, the quality of the end product. How, then, does the Naval unit instill the loyalty and motivation required to maintain the needed attitudes for adequate responsiveness?

Maintaining and promoting the morale of the personnel under his command is a principal responsibility of every commanding officer.² It is important for those in command to realize that morale cannot be bought, ordered, or even persuaded into existence. It can, however, be created by introducing into the work situation of each member of the crew certain conditions which are favorable to its development. Some of the more significant of these conditions are:

(1) There should be a friendly, timely, and adequate shipboard orientation.

(2) Crew members should know that their efforts are appreciated.

(3) Individual feelings should be respected.

(4) All should be treated fairly and impartially.

(5) Criticism should be made with fairness and consideration.

(6) Each crew member should have a feeling of pride in the worthwhileness of his work and his ship.

(7) Being a member of the United States Navy should be made a satisfying social experience.

²United States Navy Regulations, Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, August, 1948, 0709, p. 83.

While these are not all the conditions underlying morale, they are the basic ones for which commanding officers are most directly responsible. It is highly probable that in so far as these conditions exist, morale will be high and to the extent that they are lacking, morale may be low.

An atmosphere of willingness and devotion of the crew to a cause must be created. Such an atmosphere requires a definite person-to-person relationship which requires an understanding of human relationships. In a monetary sense, loyalty may be stated, military-wise, as the coordinated effort to achieve the best naval unit for the appropriated dollar. The inspiration necessary to achieve this cohesive feeling among organized personnel must come from the commanding officer. Such inspiration is readily forthcoming when he employs the principles of the management process in the execution of his command functions.

Rear Admiral Arleigh Burke once stated words to the effect that he wished he could make every man in the Navy realize that the job he is doing is important and necessary. The man peeling the spuds or chipping paint must be made to realize and believe that he is as necessary to his ship as is the captain. This, then, is the task of a commanding officer who, by establishing a sound organization based on the functions and principles of management, can

successfully accomplish this task.

A smooth-running, taut ship with strict but fair discipline will have a high morale. When the rights of the men are respected, if there is constant vigilance concerning their welfare, if they understand what is expected of them, if their off-duty time is interrupted only by necessity, then their morale, motivation, and loyalty will be high. Command emphasis on effective administration of military discipline is essential in order to establish and maintain the desired high morale.

"Among management people there is still no agreement as to whether good discipline can be maintained by courteous, considerate, and sympathetic methods of dealing with subordinates. Some believe that you have to be cold and tough to maintain discipline and that any other approach breeds softness and laxity."³

If the crew is at odds with the general spirit or management of things, if they irritate under their regulations or dislike their commanding officer, whether the fault lies with the regulations or in the commanding officer or in themselves, the command may bring out the worst in them rather than the best.

"In a democratic organization, however, these dangers are at a minimum. The absolute theory of command is

³Lawrence A. Appley, Management in Action, New York, American Management Association, 1957, p. 120.

everywhere subordinated to the human factor. Authority must be built on acceptance, confidence, and good will; and obedience of the spirit is something which commanding officers have to earn. This obedience can be earned by his following the current managerial methods and philosophies which advocate that executives (commanding officers) can follow the standards of common decency in dealing with people and still maintain high discipline and morale.

One of the greatest needs for a commanding officer to improve his handling of interpersonal relationships is empathy. He must be sensitive to the needs and feelings of his subordinates, and improvement in this area must come from the efforts of the officer himself.

Most of the highly respected commanding officers are empathic to a degree. Even though they are rarely aware of the part empathy plays in their effectiveness, its contribution is a major one. It enables them intuitively to sense the true needs of their subordinates. Knowing their needs, they can chart a course designed to give them what they want. They are assured that their subordinates will respond to their commands because, in so doing, they are actually only doing what they sensed the crew wanted to do anyway. This is one possible secret of the officer with an enlisted background. He is emotionally in tune with his enlisted subordinates and he is able to see their problems from their points of view.

Dr. Hans Hahn, who heads the Psychology Department in Transylvania College at Lexington, Kentucky, is of the opinion that empathy is the most vital quality for one who directs the efforts of others to possess.⁴ He has made this the subject of concentrated scientific research and states he has developed a test which allows him to determine the degree of empathy present in any individual.

The test is accomplished by equipment similar to that used in lie detectors. It measures the skin's resistance to slight electric currents and variations in skin temperature which are affected by man's emotional status. The test is purported to be highly accurate, can't be faked, and identifies a personality as well as fingerprints identify a person.

Hahn predicts that a time will soon come when it will be possible to select the type men best suited for positions where it is necessary for a man to be capable of getting along with and understanding other people. Should his test be proven reliable and valid, consider the benefit in selecting better commanding officers. This test could be administered as part of the officer's test battery and the result recorded in his permanent record. Coupling this with an analysis of an officer's performance in the other management categories would ensure the

⁴San Francisco Examiner, October 30, 1960.

assignment of exceptionally capable officers to command.

When a commanding officer regards his men as "serial numbers," he finds it difficult to gain their cooperation. He must offer his assistance in both their personal and professional problems. The management-wise commanding officer will not limit his activity to his cabin but will get out and meet his subordinates personally. In the larger, more complex ships it is virtually impossible to know all subordinates by name, but this should be his aim.

The customs and traditions of military life tend to make friendships between the commanding officer and his subordinates, to a great extent, off-limits. The question, then, which often arises in the minds of management-oriented commanding officers is this: Management principles emphasize friendliness as an important attribute of a good commanding officer (executive), but where is the dividing line between friendliness and over-familiarity?

Like most questions relating to human behavior, there is no cut and dried answer to this question. Actually, it is a matter of discretion, tact, and flexibility. Strict adherence to the belief that "familiarity breeds contempt" can be just as much a pitfall as overfamiliarity. From familiarity with a man's problems, his goals, his interests, his personality should breed understanding and

mutual respect. Therefore, the officer in command should welcome every opportunity to get to know his men better.


What the majority of sailors desire primarily in a "skipper" is an officer they can respect, a man they know has confidence in them and backs them up--one who lowers the boom for inadequate performance, but will let them know how appreciative he is of a job well done.

There is a major challenge to the concept of command management in the years to come. In order for shipboard management to make its contribution to the naval establishment, it must operate toward the growth of each individual in the crew. To achieve this it must maintain freedom for every individual as far as military discipline will permit--freedom to develop his own initiative, ingenuity, and ability--while still accomplishing the objectives and missions of the unit. Command management must meet this challenge. It is the most effective way to establish and maintain the required personnel cooperation within any organizational unit.

Despite the continuous turnover of personnel in a shipboard organization, from the foregoing ideas, we can arrive at a significant conclusion: "It is possible to be decent and courteous to men who are under one's daily (command) and still maintain a high degree of discipline and morale. A taut ship, which is still a happy ship, requires this kind of command."⁵

⁵Appley, op. cit., p. 122.

Acceptance of responsibility is a term which we often use, and in command management, it may be associated with two other terms--delegation of responsibility and assumption of responsibility. The easiest way to consider these terms is to visualize them in the shipboard command situation. The commanding officer delegates to his executive officer responsibility for the administrative functions within the command. The executive officer accepts this responsibility, but assumes only that portion of the responsibility which he associates with his office and himself. The remainder of the responsibility he delegates to his subordinates. His subordinates, in like manner, assume some of the responsibility and delegate the remainder downward. Whenever a subordinate is made responsible for the accomplishment of designated tasks, it is imperative that he be given sufficient authority to enable him to fulfill the task effectively. The noteworthy aspect about responsibility in this process is that, as a commanding officer, no matter how much one may delegate his responsibilities, and how much of this his subordinates may assume, the commanding officer retains the final responsibility. In the ultimate analysis, command responsibility, when personally accepted, can never be wholly transferred to someone else.



As with many other current improvements in organization processes, the sharing of authority with its derived responsibility can proceed most quickly throughout the organizational structure when it starts at the command level. It is from this level that good management in any organization is determined. Definite responsibility designated to the lowest echelon possible for effective operations is essential for responsiveness. Mid-twentieth century shipboard organizations cannot remain effective in an eighteenth century climate of "master-slave" relationships. The philosophy of command must change as men themselves change. To create a sense of responsibility by all for all would also instill a flow of respect down, as well as up.

There are many varying opinions as to how much responsibility and authority should be delegated to subordinates. Unfortunately, there is no mathematical formula that furnishes the answer. In a shipboard command sufficient authority must be granted to the various departments to enable them to better assist in accomplishing the mission. At times authority may be granted on a temporary basis for a given situation, as when an officer is assigned to get a ship underway. While he "has the conn," he has the authority and responsibility to give whatever orders he deems necessary to maintain the safety of the ship and crew. When he is relieved, he also

relinquishes all authority and responsibility for further ship maneuvers.

Without a thorough understanding of responsibility, its meaning, its assumption, and delegation, an officer could not exercise effective command. One would assume that all naval officers, having chosen the Navy a career, would seek out and carry responsibility easily. However, this is not the case, for some wear it like a weight upon their shoulders and others seek to hide from it altogether. A thoroughly trained naval officer must have instilled in him a positive attitude toward responsibility. He must seek it and assume it--readily, completely, and fearlessly.

Development of future commanding officers is one of the most significant responsibilities of those in command. This responsibility can only be accomplished when the commanding officer views his subordinates as an integral part of a continuous process having both immediate and long-term implications and requirements. In training his subordinates he should not only concentrate solely on his immediate needs, but should also incorporate the needs and desires of the individual while looking ahead to the future needs of the Navy.

The more formal aspects of such development have as one of their key points the rotation of officers from job to job so that they may gain management experience in several more or less related areas. Rotation and promotion

go hand in hand with the development of an individual's managerial abilities in handling situations of varying and increased difficulty.

All officers should endeavor to maintain the naval tradition of flexibility of command, both against the external forces of over-regulation and carelessness from within. To achieve this goal a proper understanding of management responsibility must be implanted in all naval officers from the beginning and throughout their naval careers. This concept must be nurtured by the Navy and developed by the individual officer as his career progresses. General Order 21 in effect emphasizes this concept where it states that "good management practices" is one of the elements which enables a man to inspire and to manage a group of people successfully. Much can be learned from the observation of management-wise officers and from the Navy's Management School.

Commanding officers familiar with the concepts of the management process should insure that their subordinates, especially at the middle management level, become proficient in the exercise of management functions and require that they adhere to the principles of management in carrying out these functions. By requiring this type of training he will be rewarded with a more effective and responsive naval unit.

The commanding officer alone, as a directing force,

no longer is sufficient for the modern complex afloat organizations. True, current industrial management practices may have limitations when applied to shipboard organizations; however, a philosophy of management does exist, and it is from this philosophy that commanding officers may derive and adopt management concepts to serve their own management needs.

A commanding officer who exercises his command functions by the use of management concepts would enjoy an enviable amount of success in maintaining his ship as an effective, reliable combat unit. Subordinates within such a command, certainly pleased with the personal prestige they acquire from being members of the command, would attribute the success to good leadership on the part of top command. To those in authority over the command, however, such success would be attributed to command management.

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